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AGDA (M) (24 Mar 70) FOR OT UT 694161 14 April 1970
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 43d Signal
Battalion, Period Ending 31 October 1969

SEE DISTRIBUTION

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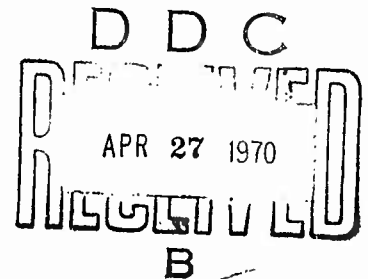
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 43d SIGNAL BATTALION
APO 96318

SCCPV-NG-PK-C

12 November 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (43rd Signal Battalion)
period ending 31 October 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

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I. Section 1. Operations: Significant Activities

a. General:

(1) The 43rd Signal Battalion was operational for the entire reporting period of 92 days, performing the mission of providing Communications-Electronics Support for USMACV Advisory Teams and base camp communications support for major tactical units of IFFV within the Kontum, Pleiku, Binh Dinh and Phu Bon Provinces in the II Corps Tactical Zone. This mission has remained unchanged since the last reporting period.

(2) On 3 August 1969, LTC Humphrey J. Martin assumed command of the 43rd Signal Battalion from the outgoing Commander LTC James G. Tice. Colonel Thomas C. Musgrave, Commanding Officer, 21st Signal Group, was the reviewing officer. Distinguished guests included Brigadier General Jack A. Albright, Deputy CG, 1st Signal Brigade; Colonel J.E. Hoover, CO Regional Communications Group; Colonel Hung, II Corps Chief of Staff.

(3) On 7 October 1969, BG Thomas Matthew Rienzi visited Company C at Kontum and participated in the change of command ceremony for that company. CPT Lynn C. Vandenberg assumed command of Company C from CPT Jeffrey Madsen. Prior to the ceremony, BG Rienzi visited Company C's sites at Tan Canh and Cheo Reo. While at Company C, BG Rienzi presented two (2) Bronze Star Medals and two (2) Army Commendation Medals to members of that unit. BG Rienzi then traveled to 43rd Signal Battalion Headquarters and was given an update briefing on the operations of the battalion.

b. Activities:

(1) Personnel and Administration:

(a) This battalion received proposed MTOE's and TDA's approved at Brigade level during the month of September. Through consultation with 21st Signal Group, the decision was made to operate under these proposed documents with promotions being currently made against positions contained in the documents. The authorized Battalion strength under these documents

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reduced battalion manning levels from 40 Officers, 19 Warrant Officers, and 1076 EM to 28 Officers, 18 Warrant Officers and 902 EM.

(b) Authorized and Assigned strength as of 31 October 69:

	<u>Authorized</u>	<u>Assigned</u>
Off	28	30
WO	18	10
EM	902	798

Replacement rates during the last two (2) months have dropped sharply creating an adverse effect on the operational efficiency and accomplishments of this battalion. To react to this effect, extensive OJT into critical MOS areas has been necessary.

(c) During the period covered by this report promotion figures reflect the following:

144 EM promoted to the grade of E4
72 EM promoted to the grade of E5
18 EM promoted to the grade of E6

(d) Gains/Losses:

Total gains - 228
Total losses - 267
Net loss - 39

(e) The following are critical MOS shortages which effect the operational efficiency of the battalion:

<u>Number Short</u>	<u>MOS</u>	<u>Title</u>
6	31J	Teletypewriter Repairman
25	31M	Radio Relay and Carrier Attendant
7	32D	Fixed Station Technical Controller
1	32F	Fixed Ciphony Repairman
1	32G	Fixed Cryptographic Repairman
31	36C	Lineman

(f) The battalion has experienced a total of 91 extensions of Foreign Service Tours during this reporting period. This has somewhat alleviated the problems caused by lack of replacement personnel.

(g) For the reporting period, members of the 43rd Signal Battalion received a total of 13 Bronze Star Medals, One Purple Heart, 47 Army Commendation Awards, and 11 Certificates of Achievement. At the close of the period, there is a total of 76 awards pending approval by higher headquarters. The battalion personnel section has initiated a program of preparing the

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personnel data section of the award recommendation form at least 120 days in advance and sending these to the units and staff sections for completion. This procedure helps to insure that recommendations for awards are forwarded in sufficient time for return prior to the individual's DEROS.

(h) On 11 August 1969, seven (7) officers and senior NCO's of the battalion were awarded the distinctive insignia of the signal corps - Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces, and on 22 October, LTC Martin, 43rd Signal Battalion Commander, received the distinctive insignia. The presentations were made by LTC Huong II Corps G-6 and MAJ Phi, II Corps Deputy G-6. The awards were given in appreciation of the assistance provided the ARVN by 43rd Signal Battalion personnel. Technical and logistical support was given the units of the 660th Signal Battalion (ARVN) by the 43rd Signal Battalion whenever possible and the presentation of these awards symbolized the outstanding relationship the ARVN and US units in this area enjoy.

(2) Support of the 4th Infantry Division unit movements became a primary activity of the 43rd Signal Battalion during the latter portion of this reporting period. Four division battalions moved from Camp Radcliff, while 2 companies, a brigade headquarters and a field hospital moved into the camp. One brigade moved into Camp Enari with no major units having moved out of Camp Enari as yet. As a result of the movements, the 586th Signal Company completed the following telephone work requests: 160 main line installations, 98 extensions, 32 removals and 90 miscellaneous work requests (moves, cancellations and directory changes). Problems have arisen in the availability of cable to support division subscribers at Camp Radcliff. Surveys are to be conducted shortly and once requirements are determined, cable expansion will be accomplished. To maintain an ability to respond quickly to division requirements, extensive coordination has been effected with the Division Signal Office and this command. An aggressive program to determine future communications requirements is being conducted through the joint efforts of the 43rd Signal Battalion and the Division Signal Officer.

(3) Maintenance:

(a) An aggressive generator maintenance and repair program was instituted at the beginning of the reporting period. Many of the battalion's communications sites rely solely on organic generators for power rather than contracted sources. In areas having post power or PA & E power, reliable back-up power sources are a necessity, as evidenced by outages experienced by contractor generators. Load banks were constructed for all sites by the battalion generator shop, in accordance with Inclosure 7. These load banks were then installed by the generator shop personnel and site personnel were instructed in their use. Increased command emphasis was placed on the necessity for running back-up generators under load daily, insuring that fuel does not become contaminated, and insuring that first echelon maintenance is consistently performed on all generators. To insure that maintenance was being performed properly, battalion generator personnel conducted stringent inspections of all battalion generators. This program has resulted in a sharp decrease in power failures due to improper first echelon maintenance.

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One of the main problem areas in the maintenance of 45KW generators was the number of generators with excessive hours of operation. Assistance in procuring replacement generators has been requested thru 21st Signal Group. To date, one each 60KW generator has been issued to the battalion, and more will be issued as they become available at Group. Seven additional ones are needed to alleviate the problem.

(b) The shortage of repair parts has been a significant contributing factor causing a high deadline rate of vehicles within the battalion. The major portion of the problem was the non-availability of repair parts being furnished by the Direct Support Unit. However, due to lack of trained personnel in PLL operations, a series of classes was initiated to give further training in the proper procedure of requisitioning, receipt and storage of the Prescribed Load List. A notable improvement has been realized as a result of these classes.

(c) HHD and Company A underwent a 21st Signal Group CMMI on 19 September 1969. Both units received an overall satisfactory rating for the inspection but failed in the motor maintenance area, with HHD scoring 67% and Company A receiving a score of 53%. On 28-31 October the units were reinspected with both units receiving passing scores (HHD-79%, Company A-71%). The passing scores were attained as a result of several steps taken following the initial inspection. Command emphasis was placed on the maintenance program with all vehicles undergoing stringent technical inspections given by motor pool personnel. An extensive deadline program was instituted with a view towards achieving better operator maintenance and more thorough parts requisitioning. Motor pool personnel worked extended shifts and provided guidance for drivers performing first echelon maintenance.

(4) Civic Action:

(a) On 12 October, 44 barrels (1800 lbs) of clothing were distributed to local clinics and orphanages, culminating a civic action project that was initiated in November of 1968. The clothes were donated by citizens of Kankakee, Illinois and through combined efforts of the Catholic Relief Service Office in Saigon, the Air Force Base Chaplain at Pleiku, and the 43rd Signal Battalion, the clothes reached Pleiku and were distributed.

(b) Continuing assistance has been rendered the Consolidated Montangard Village of Plei Ho By by the 278th Signal Company during this reporting period. Two 600 gallon pods have been given to the village for shower facilities and vehicle armor plating kits were given the CA Team at the village to provide protection from the snipers that have been active in the area of the village.

(5) Construction: The only building construction project during this reporting period was the completion of an Electronic Maintenance Shop at the 278th Signal Company. Several problems were encountered due to the increasing shortage of materials. The shop was begun in December 1968. The 4th Engineer Battalion had to repour the concrete slab for the building when the

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original slab cracked, accounting for approximately 3 months of the delay. Self-help work began immediately upon completion of the slab, with delays caused by the lack of roofing and siding materials. Occupation of the building was effected on 8 September 1969. The shop provides facilities for PLL storage and maintenance on all VHF, teletype and radio equipment within the company. Prior to the construction of this facility, the 278th Signal Company ELM section was housed in an entirely inadequate converted barracks.

(6) Operations:

(a) Systems:

1 During this quarter, the dismantling of the Camp Enari Control VHF site was completed. One (1) MSC-32, three (3) MRC-102's, one (1) MCC-6, one (1) SB-675, and the protective bunkering for this complex were removed from the site. One (1) MRC-102 and the SB-675 were relocated next to the 518th Signal Company's Microwave site on VHF Hill to activate the BBW1C system to Plei Kuing. The dismantling of this site was made possible by the activation of a second microwave system (BBM12) to Pleiku. This reconfiguration points out the conservation of men and equipment made possible with the use of microwave equipment for short range high capacity systems. No increase in personnel at the microwave site was necessary to operate the new system.

2 The BBH1B system was re-engineered to include a relay at Pleiku North on 11 October 1969. The original system from Dragon Mountain to Hon Cong Mountain did not provide satisfactory AN/TRC-24 performance. After the test system from Pleiku North demonstrated higher signal to noise ratios and better reliability, the existing circuits were cut over onto the new path. This system is important since it is the only Corps Area System linking the Central Highlands and the east coast within the northern II Corps Tactical Zone. Further improvements can be made by installing tropospheric scatter communications between these two areas.

3 The Plei Kuing Signal Site was re-engineered on 9 August 1969, to provide better quality communications for the 20th Engineer Battalion, 937th Engineer Group. Prior to the re-engineering, Plei Kuing had been serviced by an AN/MRC-112 to Pleiku Tropo Hill. Service was continually being interrupted by FM interference from the many tactical units located in Camp Enari and Pleiku. To improve service, an AN/MRC-102 system (BBW1C) was installed with VHF Hill, Camp Enari as the distant terminal.

4 Due to re-location of US Forces, the Dak To Signal Site was deactivated on 26 August 1969. The BBW6A AN/MRC-102 system from Dak To to Tan Canh was deactivated, in addition to the re-termination at Tan Canh of the BBW45 system from Pleiku. Interim communications to Dak To during deactivation was provided by an AN/MRC-112 system, again the interference created by tactical FM nets was a problem.

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(b) Circuits: The overall number of circuits carried on 43rd Signal Battalion systems remained almost constant. During the reporting period twenty-nine circuits were activated and thirty-one were deactivated. Included in the activations were two special quality data circuits servicing US advisors.

(c) Since the attachment of 578th Signal Company personnel to this battalion, six cable projects have been completed and five are currently pending. They are as follows:

1 Camp Enari:

a Cable # 15/200 pair Dragon Mountain - This cable had shown constant deterioration to the point that circuits had to be altrouted to other systems due to lack of cable pairs. Rehabilitation teams from the 278th Signal Company and attached 578th personnel located, opened, and checked each splice, repairing or replacing as required. Cable pair availability improved 20%. A project has been approved to replace the last 1,000 feet of this cable. This will eliminate six (6) splices, centralize control of this cable to one wirehead and simplify the physical layout of the cable. Cable pair availability should improve 100%.

b Cable # 04/50 - A 150 foot extension/leg of the 04 cable was replaced on 24 October 1969 by 278th Signal Company and 578th personnel. This extension had been a constant source of trouble for approximately twenty subscribers in the 4th S & T area.

c Cable # 01/400 - 278th Signal Company and attached 578th personnel rehabilitated the 01 cable; four (4) cable splices were replaced and twelve (12) terminals were replace and raised off the ground to eliminate moisture in the terminals. This rehabilitation resulted in the gaining of an additional forty (40) working pairs in the 4th Aviation area.

d Considerable work has been done to improve the marking of the outside plant at Camp Enari. The 1878th Communications Squadron (Air Force) provided fifty (50) concrete cable markers, while the 278th Signal Company and attached 578th personnel have been constructing concrete cable markers to replace the 155 mm cannisters presently being used. The Air Force has also provided a tone generator in an effort to determine the exact route of the buried outside plant at Camp Enari. New up-to-date cable maps have also been made.

e A project was initiated on 1 October 1969 to ground all lightning protector blocks on all of the telephones on Camp Enari.

f On 10 October a 50 pair cable was installed between the 278th Signal Company wirehead and the 124th Signal Battalion wirehead on Dragon Mountain. This cable provides a back-up for the Tropo cable.

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2 Camp Radcliff:

(a) 586th Signal Company personnel and attached 578th personnel installed a new 01/100 pair cable (4700 ft) to Hon Cong Mountain from the DTE on 7 September 1969. This installation replaced the old 01 cable which had deteriorated past any usefulness.

(b) The moves of various elements to the Camp Radcliff area will require the installation of more cable to Hon Cong Mountain. Four (4) cable installations are in the planning stage with target completion dates of 1 Jan 1970.

3 Kontum - Personnel from Company C completed the installation of a six (6) mile, 2 pair cable between the 518th Engineer Battalion elements at Woolly Bully and the Kontum Switchboard. Prior to this installation, Woolly Bully had only FM communications.

4 Pleiku - personnel from Company A installed 1,000 feet of 25 pair cable on the battalion perimeter. Prior to this installation, the bunkers and towers had been linked by WD-1, which had proved to be unreliable and difficult to maintain.

(d) During this quarter, the installation of TAR-5 equipment was completed at the Camp Enari and Camp Radcliff DTE's. The installed equipment includes a recorder-announcer, a record traffic analyzer, and various test equipment. The recorder-announcer provides subscribers with a vocal notice that they have, for instance, dialed a wrong number. The test equipment is designed to test direct trunking and tandem access equipment, as well as various other switching components. The record traffic analyzer will record the flow of traffic on all of the major equipment in the exchanges and will provide a peg count for the direct dial circuits and the usage factor for telephones on Camp Enari and Camp Radcliff. The main problem encountered on the TAR-5 installation was that of obtaining all of the necessary equipment and parts. Initial installation was held up by the unavailability of sections of the bays to mount the equipment. Personnel from the 278th Signal Company finally obtained these sections by traveling to Can Ranh Bay and personally escorting it back. Other missing pieces of equipment were obtained in the same manner. Present shortages have been reported to CSLMA, 1st Signal Brigade and to the OIC of the Tandem Switch in the Pleiku area. They include a handset, patching cords, and power conduit. The only pressing shortage is that of paper for the Traffic Analyzer (Universal Recorder Printer, Model 20).

(e) The tandem conditioning equipment at CPE and AKF has been installed and is in the testing phase. The Gustav-Hirsch personnel who installed the equipment were also working part time at the Pleiku Telephone Exchange (Air Force) to help them overcome technical difficulties they are presently experiencing. No major problems were encountered during this installation.

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(f) Company A, 43rd Signal Battalion installed approximately 90 ft of 2AWG ground cable between the PKU Tandem Switching Center and the EE building. This installation provides a common ground, with less than 5 ohms resistance between the frames of the two facilities.

(g) The Camp Enari Mode V terminal became the subject of increased command emphasis during this quarter. A high reject rate (12.3% in August) and low circuit reliability (88.1% in August) pointed out the need for aggressive corrective action. The following steps were taken:

1 The spiral four cable from Mode V to the 518th Microwave site was rerouted to avoid various power lines to prevent the possibility of induced AC voltage.

2 An expanded maintenance program was initiated. The operators as well as the inexperienced maintenance personnel were given training by the more experienced unit maintenance personnel in maintenance procedures to enable them to better understand and prevent the problems associated with the Autodin Terminal.

3 Maintenance personnel were sent to the Autodin Reject Course in Nha Trang. It is felt that this course aided greatly in the reduction of rejects.

4 A marked improvement in the Mode V operation was noted as a result of the foregoing actions. The reject rate was lowered to a three month average of 8.9% and a circuit reliability averaging 90.6% was achieved. Of primary importance is the high degree of customer satisfaction in the operation as expressed by the 4th Division subscribers and in particular, the Division Signal Officer.

(h) A circuit patching and testing facility is being installed at the 518th microwave site at Camp Enari. This facility is designed, and being installed by personnel of the site, and is made up completely from salvage and junk-box parts. This facility, when completed, is expected to provide efficiency in normal circuit restoration and quality control by providing the following services:

1 A centralized test point for all circuits, both 2 wire and 4 wire, with access to line side, equipment side, and provision for a monitor or bridging position not presently available at this site.

2 Complete patching facilities for all circuits, providing an alternate systems control point which could bypass the present control facility within minutes, should conditions warrant the change.

3 Provide up to ten channels for central monitoring of orderwire service channel, dial telephone, or other circuits necessary for circuit/system restoration, plus limited telephone/orderwire patching.

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4 Also incorporated within the test board is a facility for monitoring each phase of input power for voltage and frequency fluctuations through the use of voltage and frequency meters and a phase selector switch.

5 Three amplifiers with speakers are available for monitoring services when required, or when needed in circuit restoration.

6 Facilities for sending 20 hz and 1600 hz ring signals are provided for use in signalling and test purposes, and dial telephone facilities for site phone are included for convenience and efficiency.

(i) Training:

1 A total of 12 classes of the USATF were utilized by 42 personnel of the battalion. The courses and number of personnel attending each were:

<u>COURSE</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
System Control	3
PCM OPER	3
PCM Sys Orientation	1
Radio Set AN/TRC-24 OP	2
Radio Set AN/TRC-24 Maint	3
Telephone Installation and Repair	9
Cable SPLICOR	8
Mode I Repair	1
ICS-SEA Orientation	2
PLL Training	1
DCO Refresher Course	5
NTR Officer Training	4

2 Special training of selected personnel in Red Cross First Aid and 71H Refresher Course was also received at the 54th General Support Group and the USATF respectively.

3 During this reporting period the battalion experienced a large turn-over of personnel with MOS 52B, which resulted in a critical shortage of experienced personnel in this MOS. It has been extremely difficult to OJT incoming generator personnel due to a lack of qualified instructors. Coordination has been effected with 21st Signal Group to have maintenance representative come to the battalion in the very near future to conduct intensive training for 52B personnel in the maintenance and operation of 30KW, 45KW, and 60KW generators.

4 During the month of October, the 518th Signal Company detachments attached to Company A and 273th Signal Companies received 3 ARVN personnel for OJT in tactical microwave equipment. It was found that the ARVN personnel had sufficient technical potential for the OJT program, but that the

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language barrier practically precluded further training of the ARVN personnel. 518th site personnel are currently in the process of teaching the ARVN personnel basic English phrases needed to conduct the OJT program.

5 Coordination has been made with the US Advisor to the 660th ARVN Signal Battalion to conduct OJT of 31E personnel in the Electronic Maintenance Shop of Company A. This OJT will begin on 10 November and will cover the use of test equipment for Electronic Maintenance. Two personnel will be trained for each month with an anticipated total of 7 personnel to be trained during the next 3 month's period. The 43rd Signal Battalion has been providing some electronic maintenance to the ARVN when needed and this OJT program should help the ARVN perform their own maintenance in the future.

(j) Intelligence and Security:

1 Headquarters, HHD and Company A:

a A new operations order (1-69) was published which provides for the integrated defense of the MACV/TROPO Hill Defense Compound. The order tasks all organic, attached and tenant units on the MACV/TROPO Hill Defense Compound.

b Company A was tasked to defend a portion of the MACV Team 21 Compound. In order to comply with the fragmentary order issued by the MACV Team 21 Commander a defensive bunker was built in the southeast corner of the Company's RTT site located on the southern perimeter of the compound. Material for the bunker was furnished by the MACV Team Commander.

c Search and Clear Teams were organized, trained and exercised to search and clear the MACV/TROPO Hill Defense Compound prior to stand down from actual and practice test exercises. The purpose of the operation is to search for explosive devices and possible infiltrators that may have entered the compound while personnel were moving to the bunkers.

2 586th Signal Company: An extensive defoliation program to clear Hon Cong Mountain is in progress and has resulted in clearing a major portion of the area providing access to the Company's signal site located on the mountain. This is a significant event in that it is the first time since occupying the site that such a major defoliation project has been undertaken.

3 Personnel WIA and KIA: Only one WIA incident occurred during the reporting period. One EM assigned to the 278th Signal Company was wounded during an ambush while enroute from Camp Enari to the 124th Signal Battalion Civil Affairs Village, Plei Ho By. The EM was serving as a member of the CA Team at the time of the incident.

(k) Organization: None.

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II. Section 2. Lessons Learned: Commander's Observation, Evaluation, and Recommendations.

a. Personnel: None.

b. Intelligence:

(1) Defense against sappers:

(a) OBSERVATION: Defense against sappers depends upon extensive perimeter barriers, alert guard forces, illumination of perimeter and rapid response on the part of reaction forces if a penetration has occurred.

(b) EVALUATION: It has been noted that when sappers are able to penetrate US installations unobserved, their movement to and within cantonment areas is aided by poor or non-existent illumination of access routes and the cantonment area itself. Further, once US Forces are alerted, it is often difficult to place effective fire on sappers because of poor personnel movement discipline and the inability of friendly forces to make positive identification to direct fires.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That US semi-permanent and fixed installations illuminate cantonment areas and access routes thereto, without silhouetting perimeter defensive or guard positions. Further, that once the alarm is sounded, US personnel go immediately to their positions and those personnel who are assigned to protective bunkers remain inside same. Prompt assembly of reaction forces with pre-planned routes or sweeps will enable such forces to engage sappers under fire immediately upon detection without fear of firing on friendly personnel. Frequent rehearsal of reaction forces will increase force effectiveness.

(2) Search and clear operations:

(a) OBSERVATION: During attack or alert conditions which require 100% manning of defensive positions and personnel protective bunkers, US installations are subject to unobserved infiltration.

(b) EVALUATION: It has been noted that immediate scramble activity in response to an attack or siren/alarm type of alert results in a period of confusion and rapid movement followed by an absence of personnel in and around cantonment areas. Infiltrators can and have used this period to move through the area placing satchel charges and/or hiding to strike after stand-down when US forces have returned to normal duties.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That search and clear teams be organized to search the cantonment area for hidden explosives or possible infiltrators prior to stand-down after attacks or alert conditions requiring 100% response to alarms.

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(3) Alert Conditions:

(a) OBSERVATION: Operations in a combat zone demand a certain degree of vigilance as normal operating procedure. Alert conditions are designed to increase vigilance and readiness to meet impending enemy activity.

(b) EVALUATION: During recent months it has been noted that alert conditions, particularly "Gray", are imposed for weeks at a time and are not enforced on an area-wide basis according to those conditions delineated as minimum measures to be taken under condition Gray.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That alert conditions imposed be modified to meet current situations and that when imposed, current instructions be changed accordingly and enforced throughout the area or sub-area as the case may be. Further, that the need for a given condition of alert be carefully reviewed and that once imposed, the continuing need for that condition be reviewed and adjusted accordingly.

(4) Local National Privately Owned Vehicles:

(a) OBSERVATION: Although prohibited by USARV Regulation 190-30, privately owned vehicles of local national employees are licensed and operated on US installations under provision of another USARV Regulation governing vehicle registration. (USARV 190-7)

(b) EVALUATION: Allowing local nationals to operate privately owned vehicles on US installations weakens security control measures considerably. When local nationals are allowed to operate their vehicles on US installations, their presence in all areas of the installation becomes commonplace and US personnel relax their vigilance. The possibility of introducing explosives hidden on the vehicle (s) increases and it compounds an already difficult task of conducting entrance/exit searching.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That the provisions of USARV Regulation 190-30 prohibiting local nationals from operating privately owned vehicles on US installations be enforced.

(5) Control of Local National Employees:

(a) OBSERVATION: Areas where several US installations are co-located often have one authorized entrance/exit gate for local national employees. Local national employees who enter the controlled gate have access to the entire US complex. To improve Local National Control, more stringent control measures would be costly, time consuming and require additional manpower.

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(b) EVALUATION: Observation of control measures enforced at authorized entry/exit gates for local nationals is often lax and entry decisions in doubtful cases are frequently decided by local national searchers or administrative assistants rather than by the US military authorities on the scene. Furthermore, many local nationals are allowed to enter US installations without gate passes or US escort. In large complex areas where several compounds are joined, it is virtually impossible to provide adequate control measures inside the complex.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That all local national employees be granted entrance only with proper documentation or US escort. Further, that only US authorities grant entry to US installations based on existing regulation rather than local interpretation. Finally, that KP, Open Moss and maid personnel be picked up at entry points and escorted to and from their place of duty by US personnel. Finally, that a system be adopted throughout the command that requires US supervisory personnel to grant authority in writing to local national employees on an incident for incident basis, to enter or leave the compound unescorted at times other than normal work call and termination times.

c. Operations:

(1) Equipment Accessibility:

(a) OBSERVATION: Site configuration and bunker/revetment construction around communications equipment could create problems if movement of the equipment becomes necessary.

(b) EVALUATION: The location of the generators on a concrete pad on the side of Dragon Mountain, while being stable and physically secure, was not in keeping with the quick-reaction posture often necessitated by communications requirements. When it became necessary to evacuate the generators for maintenance, the roof of the generator shed had to be removed and the generators lifted out with a helicopter. A problem also arose when the 278th Signal Company was tasked with putting in a UHF system from Dragon Mountain to Plei Kuing. An additional MRC-102 was needed at the site for installation of this system, but extensive rebuilding of the site would have been necessary at a time when materials and manpower were at a premium. The system terminal was installed at a different location.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Site configuration and bunkering must provide for future equipment relocation and rearrangement. Permanent bunkering of equipment should be avoided whenever possible.

(2) Grounding of Lighting Protectors:

(a) OBSERVATION: Telephone lighting protector installations have not included proper grounding.

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(b) EVALUATION: Installing a lighting protector for a telephone without also installing the proper grounding for the protector does not provide a path to ground for the lighting surge. The lighting surge can pass through the protector to the telephone instrument unless there exists a ground somewhere in the overall circuit that is of less resistance than that provided by the telephone or the subscriber holding onto the telephone.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Installation and repair teams should be instructed on the necessity of installation of grounding on all lighting protectors.

d. Organization: None.

e. Training:

(1) Training for OIC's of Dial Exchanges:

(a) OBSERVATION: OIC's of Dial Telephone Exchanges are usually inexperienced in the operation and maintenance of an exchange.

(b) EVALUATION: The proper functioning of a Dial Exchange requires management of records, maintenance, PLL and personnel. NCOIC's usually possess the technical knowledge needed to monitor the maintenance and testing functions while officer supervision is needed for overall operation of the exchange. Junior officers seldom have an opportunity to gain experience in DTE management.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: A course for OIC's of Dial Exchanges should be initiated and conducted at 1st Signal Brigade. The course should cover the primary functions of the exchange which would concern the OIC.

(2) Utilization of NCO Academy:

(a) OBSERVATION: Many signal junior NCO's are lacking knowledge or experience in basic military subjects and leadership principles.

(b) EVALUATION: The signal MOS areas do not always give a prospective or junior NCO the type of background he needs to function as an effective leader as well as a technician. Basic soldiership is often neglected due to shift work and technical training. EM of the 278th Signal Company in the grades of SP4 and SGT E5 have been sent to the NCO Academy conducted by the 4th Infantry Division and have received valuable training in leadership and basic soldiership (e.g. map reading, weapons, survival and infantry techniques).

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(c) RECOMMENDATION: Signal units should provide opportunities for EM in the rank of SP4 or SGT E5 to attend NCO Academies whenever feasible.

(3) Mechanic Cross Training:

(a) OBSERVATION: Generator mechanics (MOS 52B) may be successfully cross trained into wheeled vehicle mechanics (63B) if the need arises.

(b) EVALUATION: During this quarter, a serious shortage of wheeled vehicle mechanics existed. During the same period, the battalion experienced an influx of generator mechanics (52B). Each generator mechanic was interviewed and given the choice of working his MOS or of receiving OJT into MOS 63B. Those who chose the OJT program have proven themselves capable of rapid acquisition of the skills needed to satisfactorily perform in MOS 63B.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Mechanical skills are generally inter-related and when a shortage exists in one mechanic specialty, the use of OJT of other specialties into the needed MOS should be considered.

f. Logistics: None.

g. Communications:

(1) Safeguarding of Antenna Towers:

(a) OBSERVATION: A guyline for the tower (AB216) at Company C, Kontum, was snapped by a truck causing communications outage.

(b) EVALUATION: A guyline on the AB-216 tower (115') located at Company C was snapped when snagged by a 2½-ton truck. The upper 60 feet of the tower collapsed, thereby causing the outage of one system until the system could be installed at an alternate location. The driver of the truck stated that he thought he had cleared the guyline. The guylines were marked with white cloth markers, but there was a lack of adequate means of traffic restriction in the area of the guylines.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Tower guylines are an essential element of a communications system and must be safeguarded as such. Guylines should be well marked and barriers should be constructed in such a manner that all traffic (vehicular and personnel) is routed away from the guylines.

(2) Provision for Alt-route:

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(a) OBSERVATION: The cable from the Pleiku Army Communications Center to the technical control facility was accidentally cut causing outages of all comm center circuits for approximately four (4) hours.

(b) EVALUATION: The cable was in a secure area and splicers were at the scene of the cut within 45 minutes. There was no means of alt-routing the circuits carried on the cable. The outage caused a back log at the comm center.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Cables carrying high priority circuits must have a back-up capability either in the form of an alternate cable or carrier system. If the using unit is not able to provide this back-up capability, coordination should be effected with other services who may be able to provide an alternate route (e.g. Air Force or other Army unit in the area).

(3) Placing High Precedence Calls through Manual Switchboards:

(a) OBSERVATION: Manual switchboards can cause delays in completing high precedence telephone calls.

(b) EVALUATION: Manual switchboard operators have no means to determine the precedence of incoming calls. In periods of peak traffic, high precedence calls are often delayed due to operators completing calls on a first come, first served basis.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Selected trunks can be utilized solely for high precedence calls. Operators can pick up on these trunks with no delay to the high precedence calling party.

(4) FM Interference on AN/MRC-112 Systems:

(a) OBSERVATION: Radio relay systems installed utilizing AN/MRC-112 radio sets are susceptible to frequency interference from tactical FM sets.

(b) EVALUATION: AN/GRC-10 radio sets operating in the 54.0 to 70.9 Mhz frequency range are continually interfered by tactical FM nets utilizing the AN/PRC-25 family of radios operating in the frequency range of 30.0 to 75.95 Mhz. Radio relay systems installed in areas with large troop concentrations in the Kontum and Pleiku Provinces did not provide adequate communications because of the many incidents of frequency interference.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That radio relay systems using AN/GRC-10 radio sets be installed only after extensive frequency coordination is made and a test shot has been in operation long enough to determine that no interference is experienced. In areas with heavy concentrations of FM nets, other radio relay equipment should be used to preclude frequency interference.

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h. Material: None.

i. Other:

(1) Construction of Barrel Line:

(a) OBSERVATION: The trench that connected the fighting bunkers at Kontum was constantly filled with water from the monsoons. This stagnant water then became breeding grounds for mosquitos and therefore a health hazard to company personnel.

(b) EVALUATION: It was determined that sand-filled barrels and sandbags, stacked on top of the barrels, would serve the same purpose as the trench. The barrel line was built parallel to the trench, and the trench filled as the barrel line was completed.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: A properly constructed barrel line is as protective as a trench system. There is no health hazard during the monsoon season or risk of injury at night (especially during alerts) from falling into the trench. If barrels can be obtained, a protective wall from bunker to bunker should be considered rather than digging a trench.

Humphrey J. Martin

7 Incl
as
Incls 2 - 5 wd HQ, DA

HUMPHREY J. MARTIN
LTC, SigC
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION:
A plus

2- CINCUSARPAC, ATTN: GPOP-DT, APO 96558
1- CG, USASTRATCOM - PAC, SCH, APO 96557
3- CG, USARV, ATTN: AVHGC-DST, APO 96375
1- CG, 1st Sig Bde, ATTN: SCCPV-OP, APO 96384
15- CO, 21st Sig Gp, ATTN: SCCPV-NG-OPT, APO 96240

SCCPV-NG (12 Nov 69) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (43rd Signal Battalion)
Period Ending 31 October 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 21ST SIGNAL GROUP, APO 96240 27 November 1969

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Subject report is forwarded IAW 1st Signal Brigade Regulation 1-19.

2. This headquarters has reviewed the basic report and concurs with the information contained therein with the following comments and/or exceptions:

a. Paragraph 1b(3)(a), page 4. Three (3) each 45 KW and two (2) each 30 KW generators have been issued to the 43rd Signal Battalion after the cut-off date for this report.

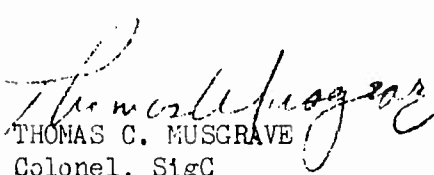
b. Paragraph 1b(6)(d), page 7. Action is being taken by this headquarters to alleviate the shortage of paper for the traffic analyzer.

c. Paragraphs 2b(3)(b) & (c), page 12. USARV Reg. 525-5, dated 10 Nov 69, has promulgated new guidance for alert conditions. However, the comments contained in the recommendation are applicable to a local area and should be presented to the installation commander.

d. Paragraphs 2b(4)(c), page 12 and 2b(5)(c), page 13. Concur in recommendations. However, enforcement is a local matter; recommendations should be presented to the installation commander.

e. Paragraph 2e(1)(c), page 14. Concur; this recommendation has been submitted to the training section of 1st Signal Brigade.

f. Paragraphs 2g(3)(b) & (c), page 16. Manual switchboard operators are advised of the precedence of all calls other than routine by subscribers. Nonconcur with recommendation, as an inherent loss in efficiency results from splitting a trunk group into two such parts.


THOMAS C. MUSGRAVE
Colonel, SigC
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION: (1st Ind Only)

6 - CG, 1st Sig Bde, ATTN: SCCPV-OP, APO 96384
2 - ACS FOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310
1 - File
5 - CO, 43rd Signal Bn, APO 96318

SCCPV-OF-AD (12 Nov 69) 2d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters 43d Signal
Battalion for Period Ending 31 October 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

DA, HQ, 1st Signal Brigade (USASTRATCOM), APO 96384 9 December 1969

TO: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST,
APO 96375

1. Subject report is forwarded in accordance with AR 525-15.

2. The following comments are made:

a. Reference item "Personnel and Administration", Para 1 b (1), Page 1:
Promotions being effected against pending MTOE being made UP para 7-15a (17)
(c), AR 600-200.


b. Reference item "TAR-5 equipment", Para 1 b (6) (d), Page 7:

(1) Camp Enari is scheduled for T&A in the 3d week of December. The
TAR-5 equipment at Camp Enari is not authorized to be used before acceptance
by the government. Any discrepancies which are the fault of the contractor,
will be corrected before Camp Enari is accepted.

(2) In response to the comment on shortage of paper for the Traffic
Analyzer, this headquarters initiated supply action on 1 Nov 69 to obtain
50 rolls of paper for the traffic analyzers throughout the 1st Signal Brigade.

c. Reference item "Training for OIC's of Dial Exchanges", Para 2 e (1),
Page 14: Concur in recommendation that junior officers assigned as Dial
Exchange OIC's receive training in the operation and maintenance of the DTE's.
Recommend, however, that this training be conducted at the Signal Group level
where the TMO personnel are more familiar with characteristics and peculiarities
of each individual exchange.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


T. E. MULLENNIEX
LTC, AGC
Adjutant General

CF:
Commanding General, United States Army Strategic Communications
Command, ATTN: SCC-OPS-RT, Fort Huachuca, Arizona 85613
Commanding Officer, 21st Signal Group, APO 96240
Commanding Officer, 43d Signal Battalion, APO 96318

AVHGC-DST (12 Nov 69) 3d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned (43rd Signal Battalion)
period ending 31 October 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 27 JAN 1970

THRU: Commanding General, United States Army Strategic Communications
Command-Pacific, APO 96557

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT,
APO 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 October 1969 from Headquarters, 43rd Signal Battalion and comments of indorsing headquarters.

2. Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning "Defense against sappers", section 2, page 11, paragraph IIb(2); concur. Illuminating access routes and the cantonment area seriously hampers the freedom of movement by the sapper. Frequent rehearsals of all reaction forces are essential for the prompt and orderly reaction to a sapper attack. No action by DA or USARPAC is recommended.

b. Reference item concerning "Search and clear operations", section 2, page 11, paragraph IIb(2); concur. This article describes one required phase following a sapper attack and relates to the above requirements (Defense Against Sappers). Only a thorough search and clear operation will insure that all infiltrators and munitions have been eliminated. No action by USARPAC or DA is recommended.

c. Reference items concerning "Alert Conditions", section 2, page 12, paragraph IIb(3), IIb(4), and IIb(5); concur with 1st Indorsement. No action by higher headquarters is required.

d. Reference item concerning "Local National Privately Owned Vehicles", section 2, page 12, paragraph IIb(4) and 1st Indorsement, paragraph 2d; concur with 1st Indorsement. USARV Reg 190-30 dated 30 July 1969, does not specifically prohibit registration and licensing of LN POVs. USARV Reg 190-7 does, however, restrict registration of vehicles owned by indigenous personnel and third country nationals to those personnel employed by the US or those under contract to the Vietnam Regional Exchange as concessionaires (Para 11a, USARV Reg 190-7). Installation commanders are authorized to approve or disapprove all requests for admittance of POV to their respective installations (Para 11b, USARV Reg 190-7). Based on the wide variance in conditions and physical layout of installations throughout RVN, it is felt that this procedure is the best means of control of POVs. The unit has been notified and been advised to coordinate with the installation commander to discuss and solve any problems which may have arisen in this area.

27 JAN 1970

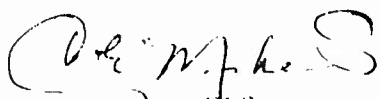
AVHGC-DST (12 Nov 69) 3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned (43rd Signal Battalion)
period ending 31 October 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

e. Reference item concerning "Control of Local National Employees", section 2, page 13, paragraph 11b(5); and 1st Indorsement, paragraph 2d; concur with 1st Indorsement. Paragraph 5c, USARV Reg 190-20 dated 11 March 1969 gives extensive guidance to installation commanders on their responsibilities in identification and control of personnel. Based on the situation peculiar to each installation, each installation commander can establish policies and procedures to adequately identify and control personnel on his installation. The unit has been notified and advised to coordinate with the installation commander to discuss any difficulties which may have arisen in this area.

f. Reference item concerning "Equipment Accessibility", section 2, page 13, paragraph 11c(1); concur. However, consideration must be given to the degree of protection required as well as the degree of accessibility. Some trade-off must be made between effort to construct protective works which will allow instantaneous removal of the equipment and the frequency and degree of effort required to remove a portion of the protection when it is necessary to relocate the equipment.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



C. E. MICHELS

MAJ, AGC

Assistant Adjutant General

Cy furn:
43d SIG BN
1st SIG BDE

SCCP-OP3 (12 Nov 69) 4th Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (43rd Signal Battalion)
period ending 31 October 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

Headquarters, U.S. Army Strategic Communications Command, Pacific
APO San Francisco 96557 1 4 FEB 1970

TO: Commander in Chief, U.S. Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT
APO 96558

1. Subject report is forwarded in accordance with AR 525-15.
2. This headquarters has reviewed and concurs with subject report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Frank C. Mahin
FRANK C. MAHIN
COL, GS
Chief of Staff

CF: w/o Incl
Commanding General, U.S. Army, Vietnam, APO 96375
Commanding General, 1st Signal Brigade (USASTRATCOM) APO 96384
Commanding Officer, 21st Signal Group (USASTRATCOM) APO 96240
Commanding Officer, 43rd Signal Battalion (USASTRATCOM) APO 96318

GPOP-DT (12 Nov 69) 5th Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 43rd Signal Battalion for Period
Ending 31 October 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 17 FEB 70

THRU: Commanding General, US Army Strategic Communications Command,
Fort Huachuca, Arizona 85613

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters concurs in subject report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



C. L. SHORTT
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

CF:
DA, ACSFOR
CG, USASTRATCOM-PAC

SCC-PO (12 Nov 69) 6th Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 43rd Signal Battalion for Period
Ending 31 October 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

Headquarters, United States Army Strategic Communications Command, Fort
Huachuca, Arizona 85613 12 MAR 1970

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

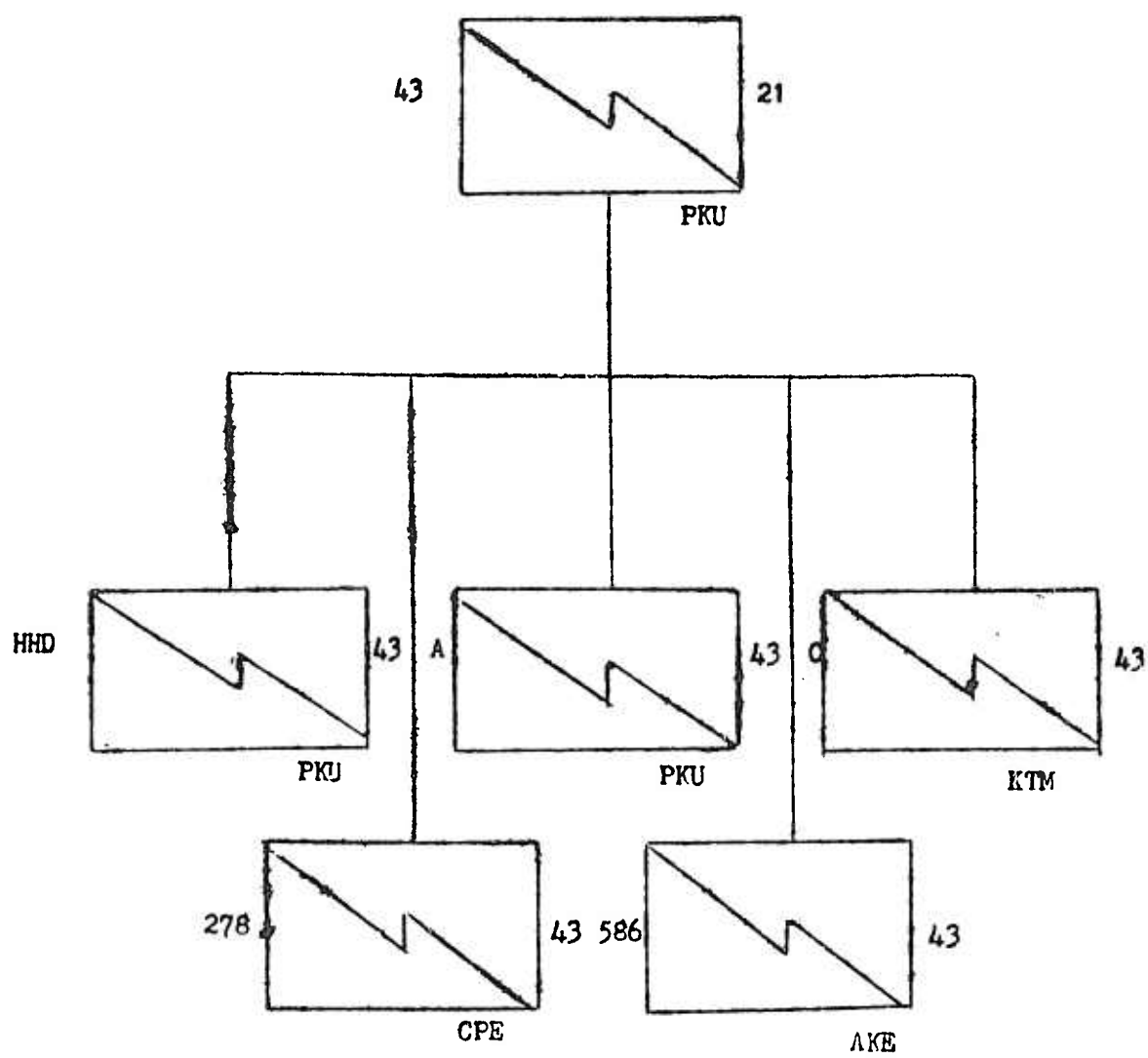
This headquarters concurs in subject report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

M. G. Alderson
M. G. ALDERSON
12 MAR 1970

43RD SIGNAL BATTALION

ORGANIZATION



Incl 1

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 43RD SIGNAL BATTALION
APO 96318

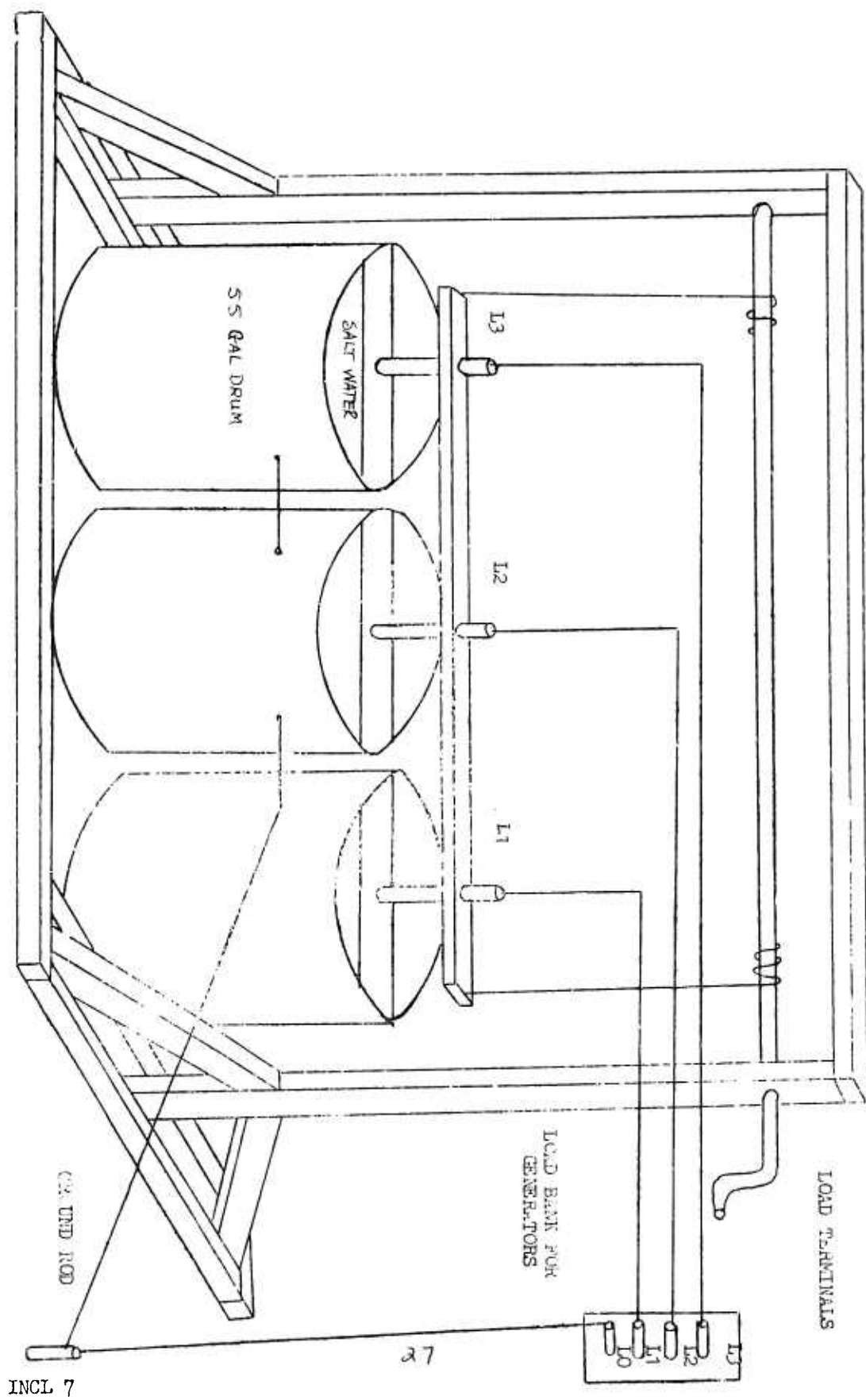
APPROVED MTOE'S

UNIT	LOCATION	MTOE	USASCC	UIC
HHD, 43rd Sig Bn	PKU	11-500D	24/67	WDQZTO
Co A, 43rd Sig Bn	PKU	11-500D	25/67	WDQZAO
Co C, 43rd Sig Bn	KTM	11-500D	26/67	WDQZCO
278th Sig Co	CPE	11-117D	02/67	WCF3AA
586th Sig Co	AKE	11-117D	04/67	WCF6AA

PROPOSED MTOE'S & TDA'S

HHD Augmentation TDA CC WDQZ 9900				WDQZTO
Co A	MTOE	11-117G	01/70	WX56AA
Co C	MTOE	11-117G	01/70	WX58AA
278th	MTOE	11-117G	01/70	WCF3AA
586th	MTOE	11-117G	01/69	WCF6AA

Signal Support Detachment Pleiku - TDA CC W25Y AA
Signal Support Detachment An Khe - TDA CC W25N AA 00



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